

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

March 7, 1969

INFORMATION

S E C R E T

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Henry A. Kissinger

SUBJECT: Summary of CIA Survey, "Restless Youth"

The present report is useful in examining world-wide student unrest. The short capsules of individual foreign country movements are especially valuable.

The report is less useful in its treatment of U.S. student unrest. It is at variance with many of the findings of the FBI report, and based on the factual documentation in the latter, the FBI report appears to be the more reliable on the domestic movement.

The CIA report: (1) has a behavioral, social-psychological emphasis, and could be characterized as an attempt to understand "what makes Johnny riot." (2) It tends to dismiss communist and other outside influence as a factor, and its analysis of that particular problem seems to raise more questions than it answers.

The Phenomenon

Student dissidence is not a recent phenomenon. It was a periodic occurrence in Ancient Athens and Imperial Rome. Socrates complained that students of his time had "bad manners, contempt for authority, disrespect for older people." Medieval Cambridge and Oxford experienced periods when protesting students burned and sacked the town and

S E C R E T

ON-FILE NSC RELEASE  
INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

S E C R E T

Page 2 - CIA Summary

outlying villages, with many killed of both town and gown. Student rioters were in the forefront of the 1848 European and 1905 Russian revolutions. In Latin America, student riots have an almost constitutional tradition, while in Japan they now enjoy a quasi-legal place in the legislative process.

Student dissidence during the past 2 years has closed down several great universities and severely altered many more; it has fomented civil violence and transformed political careers in more than 20 countries.

The phenomenon of contemporary student dissidence may conveniently be examined in four elements: Milieu, Personnel, Theory, and Tactics.

#### Milieu

The contemporary student was born and raised in a world of peace and affluence. Therefore, his mode of perceiving his environment is far different from that of the generation raised in the inter-war years of depression and fascism. The most salient characteristics of his perceived surroundings are likely to include the following:

- A huge middle class bound to its material possessions and resistant to any change.
- A government ruled by men who came to power twenty-five years ago, invested with cronyism, laced with corruption, and conducted through a ponderous, impersonal, inefficient bureaucracy.
- A technocratic, dehumanizing, computerized, competitive economy.

His most immediate environment is, of course, his university. University populations have more than doubled world-

S E C R E T

S E C R E T

Page 3 - CIA Summary

wide in ten years. (France: 600,000; UK: 350,000; FRG: 370,000; USSR: 1,900,000; US: 6,300,000.) This explosion has strained facilities far beyond capacities in most countries. Construction of facilities and expansion of facilities has not nearly kept pace. It is especially critical in metropolitan universities. For example, 100,000 students attend the Sorbonne in facilities designed for far less than half that number. The environment, then, is one of overcrowded, over-priced living quarters; too-large classes with far too little personal contact with faculty members. The congestion is aggravated by a wholly inadequate administrative machinery epitomized by the hostile depersonalization unique to IBM cards, endless lines, and over-worked registrars. It is not without significance that almost every major disturbance has occurred in one of the vast "multiversities" of Europe and the Americas. In 1800 of the 2100 colleges and universities in the United States, there has been nothing worse than panty-raids.

The student milieu, then, is one that can easily lead to frustration, alienation, or what the existentialists have called, "Angst."

Before this can be externalized into active protest, however, a "protest role" must exist. The success of the civil rights protests of the early sixties--demonstrating at once the inability of the "system" to cope with disruptive protest and the efficacy of the tactics of confrontation--brought into existence a "protest role." At first tentatively, then with ever growing boldness, students in varying stages of "Angst" found solace in the "protest role."

The mass media publicized to the world the existence and the effectiveness of the new "protest role," and by their focus on violence, police intervention, etc., they have added to the romantic, embattled appeal. French officials have commented on the media grapevine effect of Berkeley, Columbia and Berlin upon the Paris riots. Students themselves are

S E C R E T .

S E C R E T

Page 4 - CIA Summary

highly mobile, and interpersonal communication across national boundaries is high. (There are more than 90,000 foreign students studying in the U.S.; 80,000 U.S. students studying abroad.)

Personnel

There is a rather clear distinction to be found between the majority of the participants in student dissidence and the leadership.

In every country the hard-core militants are very few. Quite often they are five or ten years beyond the undergraduate age level and are not enrolled in full-time study. It is upon these hard-core organizers (with the assistance of associates who arrive from afar as a crisis breaks out) that the burden falls to sustain a budding protest by skillful crisis management. Most often a protest will start over some modest list of local or administrative grievances. As it takes hold, the leadership must escalate demands and thereby widen the appeal to hold the allegiance of growing numbers with their widely varying gripes--from the League for Sexual Freedom to the DuBois Club. It is they who must weave a strand of vague, inchoate resentments into active protest. Typically, they must count also upon administrative bumbling and paralysis.

Sociologists have called the process whereby more and more participants are drawn into protest (not unlike a lynch mob) "radicalization." There is no agreement as to the dynamics involved and no evidence that any great number of students remain radicalized once the initial exhilaration of combat is past.

The great majority of participants in student dissidence take part because it is really a lot of fun--it is where the action is. Adolescent rebellion, existential "Angst," systemic alienation--all may be purged through the simple act of adopting

S E C R E T

S E C R E T

Page 5 - CIA Summary

the now-existing "protest role."

Theory

The fifties witnessed a rebirth in Europe, and then the United States, of an interest in Marxist social criticism. Its adherents subscribe to varying dogmas and eclectic programs applying the old Marxist politics of the thirties to the issues of the new day, under the name of the "New" politics. Their heroes have come to be Mao, Castro, and Che Guevara, and their prophets C. Wright Mills, Herbert Marcuse, Frantz Fanon, and Regis Debray. The only thing new is the theme that the revolution has not come because the capitalists have doped the workers with color televisions and Mustangs, and that the new proletarians are the students. The actual program of this "New" left is nihilism. There is very little prescription and no discussion of the apocalyptic future. The system must be destroyed; then the future will be dealt with.

Tactics

The operational tactics of the New Left are those of expedient escalation--the broadest possible slate of demands to obtain the support of all possible factions. An attempt is made to follow the precepts of Lenin by attempting to go outside the university to make common cause with the workers. While this found fleeting success in Paris, it has failed entirely elsewhere in Europe. In the United States, the Ghetto has shown little inclination to join in student actions. Even the Black Power factions have shown a growing reluctance to cooperate.

The current stage of tactical escalation seems to have moved beyond mass mobilization (the Pentagon protest seems likely to have been the last) toward smaller, more intensive, more violent protests--on the model of Columbia.

S E C R E T

S E C R E T

Page 6 - CIA Summary

Outside Influence

There is no monolithic organization in the student movement. The SDS, for instance, in the United States is really only a loose conglomeration of local chapters. There are many connections, however, with the CPUSA. It is not within the competence of the reporting agency to examine this in detail.

It is known that Peking, Moscow, Havana, and other sources have provided funding to various elements of the student movement, but exact information as to amounts and recipients, as well as influence and control gained thereby, is not available in the present report. The report does mention, without elaboration, the activities of the International Union of Students in Prague, and of Ulbricht's SED party as conduits of support to Western movements. Although direct hierarchical control, as in the Comintern years, is almost certainly not present, the benefits of keeping the pot boiling selectively are obvious.

There are now the beginnings of international liaison--substantial at the individual level, and to a lesser extent at the organizational level. The sponsorship has been by Moscow, Peking, and Havana on the one hand, and news-hungry media on the other.

Prognosis

There is no attempt made to predict the future course of dissidence in the present report. On the basis of the hard data available, it is not possible to assess whether the crest has been reached. For future consideration, the paper points out only that it is apparent already in Western countries that many militants seem to choose careers in teaching and in the communications media--professions where they are likely to exercise an influence far out of proportion to their tiny numbers.

S E C R E T .



CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20505

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

18 February 1969

**EYES ONLY**

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Honorable Henry A. Kissinger  
The Assistant to the President  
for National Security Affairs  
The White House

SUBJECT: Student Unrest

1. Herewith is a survey of student dissidence worldwide as requested by the President.

2. In an effort to round-out our discussion of this subject, we have included a section on American students. This is an area not within the charter of this Agency, so I need not emphasize how extremely sensitive this makes the paper. Should anyone learn of its existence it would prove most embarrassing for all concerned.

3. Also per the President's request, I am prepared to give a thirty-minute briefing based on this study whenever it meets his convenience.

*Rich*

Richard Helms  
Director

Attachment - 1  
"Restless Youth", Copy No. 1  
No. 0555/69.

SECRET